

seriously. He was taken to the juvenile detention center in Seattle, where he was booked on felony charges," Urquhart said. "There are specific statutes for threatening to bomb, and that comes with the possibility of a fine and jail time. But those are up to the judge to decide."

"It is important to talk with the kids, both in school and at our homes, about being safe and making safe choices," Bailey said. "But it is also really important to know the consequences for being involved in something like this."

With regard to the bomb threat for June 15, deputies swept the school the evening of June 14 and staff members secured it, Bailey said. The building had no activities and no staff members returned to the building until it was opened in the morning.

Bailey and the staff remained on heightened vigilance throughout the day and staff and administrators were continually present at bus lanes, in hallways, common areas and bathrooms to ensure student safety.

Staff members are also participating in the investigation of the first message, thoroughly checking records and accounting for each student's whereabouts at the time it was written June 12.

Urquhart gave specific advice for students — to be vigilant and report any rumors or odd behaviors to teachers or parents.

"These things almost never occur in a vacuum and almost always someone hears about it, even if it is hearsay at the school, and certainly we will want to hear about it," he added.

"Everybody has to take responsibility for protecting everyone else in society or in life, and schools are a good place to start," he concluded. "It is certainly something that I teach my kids."

Reporter Chantelle Lusebrink can be reached at 392-6434, ext. 241, clusebrink@isspress.com.

Citizen input sought for county charter review

BY JIM FEEHAN

Issaquah area residents will have their chance to weigh in on amending the King County charter during a public meeting this week in Preston.

The charter, which operates much like the county's constitution, provides a framework for how the county is governed.

During June and July, the King County Charter Review Commission will hold a series of public meetings throughout the county. The 21-member commission will meet from 6:30-8 p.m. June 21 at the Preston Community Center multipurpose room, 8625 310th Ave. S.E.

Commissioner John Jensen, of Newcastle, will chair the meeting.

Residents can submit comments and changes to the charter by attending a public meeting, by e-mailing charter.review@metrokc.gov or by calling Charter Review Coordinator Mark Yango at (206) 296-4628.

For more information, go to www.metrokc.gov/exec/charter.

Every 10 years, the county must convene a committee of citizens to review the charter and take feedback from the public on potential changes to how county government is set up and how it operates.

Former Gov. Mike Lowry, of Renton, and former King County Councilwoman Lois North, of Seattle, co-chair the commission.

During its term, the commission is expected to review the charter and recommend any changes or

improvements.

The commission will recommend charter amendments and revisions to the County Council, and recommendations approved by the council will be placed on the ballot for voters' approval. The charter commission will disband after the November 2008 general election.

In 1997, the then charter panel recommended things such as establishing an independent Board of Ethics; authorizing the council to

prepare biennial rather than annual budgets; creating a planning commission to advise on land-use issues in unincorporated King County; and forming a task force to study and recommend new ways to govern unincorporated King County.

Voters approved King County's charter in November 1968 and it took effect May 1, 1969, making local voters the first in the state to adopt a home rule charter. The home rule provision allows counties to adopt rules that change their form of government and/or create requirements for the operation of government beyond those required in the state constitution.

Reporter Jim Feehan can be reached at 6434, ext. 239, or jneucas@isspress.com

City fire code approved June 12 brings new fees

BY JON SAVELLE

Cause a fire in Issaquah, and it's going to cost you.

A new fire code, compiled by Fire Marshal Tim Pilling and endorsed by the City Council's Land Use Committee June 12, for the first time includes a provision to charge anyone who triggers a response from firefighters.

The fees are intended to cover the cost of personnel, supplies and equipment, and they apply even to false alarms. They are distinct from operational permit fees, such

as routine charges for fire alarm inspections, for which there is a schedule of fixed costs.

The changes are contained in Agenda Bill 5633, which replaces the old code (Issaquah Municipal Code Chapter 16.06) with the 2006 International Fire Code, in accordance with state law.

"I went through Chapter 16.06 and redid the whole thing," Pilling told council members John Rittenhouse, Eileen Barber and David Kappler. "I deleted six or seven ordinances. The big change is the fees."

In the new version of that chapter, a new section 3.62 is entitled

"Fire Suppression Fees." It reads as follows:

"A fee shall be imposed on any person whose actions lead to a response from the Issaquah Fire Department in the following cases:

"For responses made to a fire or accident, which occurred as a result of a negligent or intentional act, the fee shall be imposed against the individual or individuals responsible for said act; or

"For responses made as a result of maliciously set false alarms or repeated nonmaliciously set false alarms, the fee shall be imposed against the individual or

individuals responsible for false alarm.

"The fee shall be equal to reasonable costs, as determined by the fire chief, incurred by city in responding to a fire or alarm, including the cost to deploy fire or emergency personnel and the number of personnel deployed; the cost of personnel replacement cost of consumable items, such as foam, air oxygen; and the replacement of equipment destroyed or while combating a fire and replaced by proceeds from insurance."

Pilling had a straightforward rationale for establishing the

"I would rather charge the person getting our service than citizens of Issaquah paying to that service to someone else

Sunset Hair Design

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PRESS EDITORIAL

County charter gets a much-needed review

Every 10 years, King County is required to review its charter, the document that spells out the form of local government we all live under. This year is the fourth such time the 1968 document has come under its periodic review. The first step is to collect public testimony, with proposed changes headed to the ballot in 2008.

The King County charter spells out how many council members there will be; the number of committees the council can have and who will be on them; the executive branch and the executive's relationship to the council; the referendum and initiative process; and other details. In addition to structure, the charter attempts to reflect core values such as promoting an effective and responsive government.

The question we now must ask is how can the charter mandate a much more effective and responsive government?

For the last 15 years, King County government has struggled with its own identity. As more county land is incorporated, the role of King County has changed, making it more of a service provider. In the shuffle, the residents of unincorporated King County have less representation than ever, although they are the ones who still look to the county for governance.

For example, look at the Charter Review Commission itself. Of the 21 commissioners, only one is from the unincorporated area. With that kind of lopsided membership, it is unlikely that charter amendments will address a more balanced representation — but it should.

More critical is the balance of power between the council and the executive. As it stands, the council says one thing and the executive can ignore it. Case in point is the widening and improvements so critical to Issaquah-Fall City Road. Three times, the council has approved funding for the road and each time, King County Executive Ron Sims has signed the budget.

But for three years, Sims has failed to direct county staff to proceed with the project. That kind of power is shameless, taking away from the will of people who speak through their elected council member.

Issaquah's County Councilwoman, Kathy Lambert, has 44 changes she is recommending to the charter. She will present those when the commission meets in the Preston Community Center at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, June 21. This is a chance to offer your own recommendations, or just get a good civics class in county government.

OFF THE PRESS



Food drive

Thank you for helping letter carriers collect more than 15 tons for food bank

The letter carriers food drive Saturday, May 12, collected more than 30,050 pounds of food for our local food bank. Thanks to everyone for their generosity in their donations, time and effort.

Julia Benson

Issaquah letter carrier and food drive coordinator

Schools fundraiser

Thank you to a community that always makes education a priority

Thank you to every single community member who answered the call to support local schools during the Issaquah Schools Founda-

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